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PRESS RELEASE

EMERGENCY MODIFICATION OF SNOW MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR THE CITY OF BERWYN

Berwyn, IL (February 2014) Northeastern Illinois continues to cope with a record number of snowstorms this season. To date, Chicagoland has had nearly two times the average amount of snow we would normally expect. Compounded with the record breaking cold last month, the City of Berwyn is joining neighboring communities by modifying standard snow management practices.

What the City of Berwyn is Doing

The City remains focused on delivering the safest roads possible given the circumstances. This means that all nine of the City's full-sized plows and two front-end loaders will be continually utilized during snow storms. Furthermore, every Berwyn Public Works employee will be on call and working as much overtime as is needed and safely allowable. The priority of Berwyn Public Works will be to first clear main corridors followed by the residential neighborhoods. This commonly used method leads to the potential for snow packed residential streets.

The area salt shortage has been widely reported in the media and the City of Berwyn is not immune. Due to the record cold in January, the Mississippi River has frozen and salt suppliers are unable to receive salt shipments as normal. This shortage has caused the scarcity and price of ice melting salt to sky rocket. The City was fortunate and has identified a temporary salt supplier that was able to fill an emergency purchase order. Unfortunately, this supply of salt comes at a higher price.

In order to responsibly manage the City's salt inventory, the Berwyn Public Works Director has instituted emergency salting procedures. This means that intersections will be salted but mid-blocks may not be. As a last resort, sand and cinder may be mixed with the salt to provide added traction.

As of February 5th, 2014 the Berwyn Public Works Director has initiated emergency snow removal activities due to the extreme amount of snow in the alleys. In addition to the ongoing snow removal efforts, front-end loaders will begin pushing snow from alleys starting Thursday and will follow the garbage pickup schedule. This may require residents to remove snow on their garage apron. Additionally, the use of heavy equipment in the alleys will create substantial noise that may be disruptive. We apologize for any inconvenience but these measures are necessary for removing snow from the driving portion of the alleys.

What Residents Can Do to Help

First and foremost, remain safe. Streets, crosswalks, sidewalks and stairs can all be extremely dangerous in these conditions. Please make sure to give yourself extra time and take it slow if you need to go out.

The way people come together in circumstances such as these are what make a community truly unique. We are asking residents to assist neighbors and friends. Young children, the elderly, and the infirmed may need extra assistance during winter storms; we hope Berwyn residents look out for the most vulnerable in our community.

Residents should also take note of their posted street cleaning days and encourage their neighbors to do the same. The City's parking enforcement officers will be ticketing vehicles that do not comply with the posted parking restrictions. City plows are unable to properly curb snow if obstructions are in the way. These obstructions not only include vehicles but also furniture that people place in the street to save parking spaces.

Finally, the City encourages all business owners and residents to properly clean snow around their property. By clearing sidewalks and alleyways around your property, you are helping to create a safe environment for children to walk to school and adults to get to work. The City asks that you do not, however, shovel snow into the streets. Snow shoveled into streets and alleys creates dangerous conditions for drivers and only exacerbates problems.

While we may not be able to control the weather, we can all work together and persevere under these unusually tough conditions.

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